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ABSTRACT

Due to automation technology, financial restrictions, and resultant downsizing, library managers have increasingly relied on the services of contractors, rather than in-house staff, to accomplish different technical services operations. Contracted services may range from a small project for a selected group of materials to a large project for complete cataloging, authority work, physical processing and retrospective conversion. While a library's individual needs and circumstances vary, there is a core set of questions and considerations common to all outsourcing options. This checklist has been compiled to stimulate thought regarding the variables to be identified and analyzed when comparing the advantages and disadvantages of using outsourcing, and will help a library in selecting possible services to be outsourced, determining associated in-house concerns and costs, and gathering information about a contractor. Through use of this tool, libraries can collect data and make informed decisions in determining which option best meets their individual needs. Sections include an examination of outsourcing for each specific library function (cataloging, classification and holdings information, authority processing, and physical processing of materials); initial outsourcing considerations; retention of some in-house activities; investigation of contractors; and financial considerations. A bibliography refers to 13 related sources. (MAS)

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